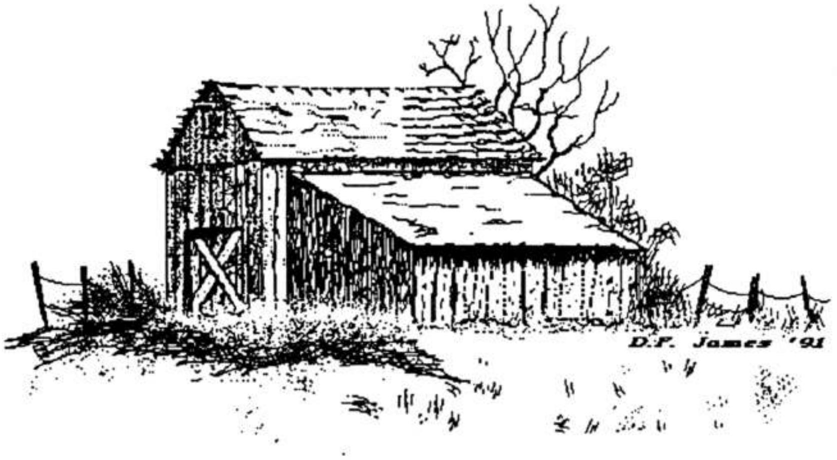
PCG
Official Commodore User Group #346

JANUARY 1992
NEWSLETTER

Pittsburgh Commodore Group
P. O. Box 16126, Pittsburgh, PA 15242
Volume 10 Number 1



GeoSig

by John Blasdell

Meeting Topics

We had a good turnout at the December meeting. December is hard to predict; depending on weather and family plans, the December meeting may be crowded or have only 20-25 in attendance. One activity in the afternoon GEOS group was getting everyone logged on to the club BBS who hadn't previously done so. The program theme in January is telecommunications and we'll continue that in the GEOS SIG. Jim Reedy will bring his PC and give us a guided tour of America Online, the "official" GeoWorks BBS. The company that owns Q-Link started America Online for Apple computers, expanded it to include Macintosh support, and is now growing with many MS-DOS users. We'll also access some local BBSs Jim is familiar with.

Commodore in 1992

A year-end article in USA Today mentioned stocks in various categories predicted to perform well in 1992. Guess the one computer company they predicted to do great in 1992. I know, I also wondered if that article was written at their Christmas party. An article in .Info magazine also reported Commodore doing well as a company, with C-64 sales up 30% in the last fiscal year. Amiga and CDTV together only grew 20%, so the C-64 is actually growing (again) faster than the Amiga! If this all sounds strange, it's because 85% of Commodore's sales were in Europe. Since the C-64 is alive and selling, we can hope for additional software, especially programs imported from Europe.

Letters

I don't know GeoWorks' plans concerning user groups, but I wrote to them anyway saying we're here, have many interested 8-bit and PC members, and please include us in any communication with user groups. I included a newsletter. I also wrote to RUN and Compute magazines asking that we be included in their user group listings. I've written to magazines in the past with no results, as have other PCG members. Our

Continued on Page 11...

This Month's Schedule
Sunday, January 19, 1992

9:00 - 9:30 Meeting Registration.

9:30 - 11:00 Morning Sig Meetings.
Amiga: New BBS Demonstration
Beginner-C64-C128

11:15 - 12:30 General Meeting in the Main Lecture Hall.

12:30 - 12:45 A small break, PCG Store open and raffle tickets drawn.

12:45 - 1:45 Afternoon SIG Meetings
GEOS

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PCG Calendar

Board members, please note: All Board Meetings are Mandatory.

Friday, January 24, 1992: Newsletter articles due on PCG BBS (412) 434-5483. Please note: *This is one week earlier than usual!*

Sunday, February 9, 1992: Newsletter folding and Board Meeting.

Sunday, February 16, 1992: Membership Meeting at Duquesne University.

PCG DIRECTORY

Pittsburgh Commodore Group (PCG) PO BOX 16126 Pittsburgh, PA. 15242

BOARD MEMBERS

President	Neal Kushner	828-3505
V.P. & Librarian	Marilyn Richards	531-0531
V.P. for Programs	Brian Schwadron	-
Director of Public Relations	Ed Berger	828-4710
Treasurer	Mark Snowden	487-4725
Secretary	John Mulcahy	921-3947
Board Members at Large	Ed Eichenlaub	-
	Rick Bilonick	-
	Sean Peck	921-4962
Past President & Duquesne Advisor	Reg Ney	655-3261

MEETINGS Meetings are held the 3rd Sunday of every month, except July & August, at Duquesne University's Mellon Science Hall. Visitors are welcome.

9:30 - 9:45am Doors open at Mellon Hall. Registration, Doughnuts & Coffee, Vendor's Tables & Flea Market open.

9:45 - 11:00am Special Interest Groups AM Sessions.

11:00am - 12 Noon Business meeting and/or Scheduled Speakers in Falk Hall on the first floor. If no meeting or speaker is scheduled, SIG's continue.

12 Noon - 1:00pm PCG Store opens, Vendor's Tables & Flea Market re-open.

1:00 - 3:00pm Special Interest Groups PM Sessions.

LIBRARY The Librarians, Neal Kushner and Marilyn Richards, copy **PUBLIC DOMAIN** and **SHAREWARE** disks for PCG Members. There is a small fee for the disk and service. The Librarians also accept donations of software for all Commodore computers, and attempt to help members locate programs in our extensive library.

PCG BBS The PCG BBS can be reached at 2400/1200/300 bps, 8 bits, no parity, 1 stop bit. Call 434-5483 24 hours a day. Sysop: John Mulcahy.

DISCUSSION GROUPS For those who are new members or are not familiar with the workings of the PCG, we hold discussion groups as a part of the meeting, before and after the regular business meeting. Discussion groups are the informal gatherings that the PCG tries to hold each month so that various users can get together and share their ideas or questions about the many aspects of Commodore computing.

Discussion topics may range from how to set up that new C128 to compose music using machine language or the ins and outs of using your modem with Compuserve or QLink. We hope to establish several varied discussion groups at each meeting and then report back the results or findings in the newsletter the next month. Everyone is welcome to come, ask questions, sit back and listen, offer advice and have a good time.

I would like to know your thoughts concerning discussion groups. If you have a particular subject or idea you'd like to see, this is your chance to speak up. We plan to continue with the C128, Amiga, GEOS, and educational groups on a monthly basis again this year. I would like to expand the groups so that we can introduce graphics, music, telecommunications, etc. to both the new and current members. Please volunteer your service if you can. You don't have to be an expert to lead a group, just have an interest and be willing to share some time with your fellow users.

Amiga - Rick Bilonick
Geos -
C-64/C-128 -

NEWSLETTER The Newsletter is published monthly. Its $1.50 cost is included in the $20.00 annual PCG Membership Fee. Members are encouraged to submit articles of all types. *Please proofread carefully.* Upload your article to the **PCG BBS.** All submissions received by the last Sunday of the month will be considered for inclusion in next month's issue. You may also mail your articles on paper or on disk to the PCG at the above address. Preferred formats are ASCII, Wordperfect 4.x, SpeedScript, or EasyScript, although other formats may be accepted.
Editor: Eric Kennedy **Phone:** 741-3562

This issue of the **PCG Newsletter** was created using the following:
HARDWARE
Amiga 1000, LaserWriter, Migraph Hand Scanner, and assorted other goodies
SOFTWARE
Professional Page, WordPerfect , Uedit, Touchup, ExpressPaint

PCG STORE
The PCG Store features monthly specials on disks, books, magazines, and assorted useful items. See the descriptions in this Newsletter. Back orders, and Mail orders are possible by arrangement with the Manager or Librarian.

ADVERTISING

Full Page	$60
Half Page	$40
Quarter Page	$25

Classified Ads **FREE** to Members

All requests for ads ***MUST*** be accompanied by **camera-ready art** or a pre-approved electronic format (such as a Professional Page file or IFF graphic) and payment in full, and must be received by the first day of the month in which they are to appear. Please mail your requests to the address shown at the top of this page.

THANK YOU
To our Supporting Sponsor, Duquesne University

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Membership Dues are $20 for one year. Bring this application & a check to the next meeting, or mail to:

Pittsburgh Commodore Group
PO BOX 16126 Pittsburgh, PA 15242

DATE____________ NEW____ RENEWAL______

NAME____________________________

ADDRESS__________________________

CITY____________________________

STATE__________________ ZIP________

PHONE (HOME)__________ (WORK)__________

COMPANY_________________________

OCCUPATION_______________________

EQUIPMENT________________________

____

SIGNATURE________________________

THE CLUB NOW EXCEEDS 250 FAMILIES, and we mail to over 50 other User Groups around the world. The total computerist readers of this newsletter is in the thousands.

No copying programs of any type may be run at the meetings.
Anyone found using any copying program at the meeting will be evicted. First offense - 3 month suspension. Second offense - permanent suspension and forfeiture of all dues.
Visitors may not bring computers or disks.
Everyone must register at the sign in desk.
Rooms will not be available until 9:30 AM.

President's Notes

by Neal R. Kushner

If I only had the time, the things I could and would do. Have you ever noticed that there is never enough time? There is never enough time for the family, or the house, or work, or the computer club. If I had the time I would take the family on a nice long vacation, say about a year or so, just long enough to visit every state capitol, my son's idea. If I had time I'd be able to finish remodelling our home. If I had time I could finish my work and do everything assigned to me. If I had time there are just a few programs I'd like to write for the P.D..

Well I don't and neither do you. No one has enough time. When I was back in college it was said that the freshmen were given more homework than they could handle just to weed out those that just couldn't handle it. It is called priorities. You have to decide just what it is that is important to you.

What does all this B.S. have to do with the PCG? No, I am not resigning, no, I am not giving up my librarian position; yes, I am asking for everyone to think about what they are going to be doing this year. When thinking about running for an office you have to decide if you could do better than the person who presently has the office. Would you be as good? Could you be any worse?

Have you made your New Years resolutions yet? I have.

Now all I need is a little time!❑

Secretary's Comments

by John Mulcahy

Well, last month's board meeting was kind of dull. It went fast and I was home in record time. Not much happened. The only thing that was brought up was possibly including a disk to mail with our newsletter. Initially I was strongly against this idea. As the arguement unfolded though, I began to think to myself "Hey this isn't such a bad idea after all!"

Of course, there are problems with mailing the disk; the costs involved with said mailing, and finally WHERE we are going to come up with such great programs month after month. Also, is there a demand for this?

Further research is definitely the order on this one. But I do say if we can do this and there is an interest, I say all the more power to you!

Well, that's about all I wanted to talk about here as I am rather tired as of this writing. See you at the meeting! ❑

Board Meeting Minutes

by John Mulcahy

Here are the minutes for the Board Meeting which took place on December 8, 1991.

The previous month's minutes were approved.

V.P. & Librarian's Report: Marilyn Richards reported on November Sales. She had received an answer from the author of NovaTerm with regards to the user group discount and registration plan. She was going to attempt to find out the interest of the members of the group for such a plan. Marilyn also expressed the need to order more The Write Stuff software packages.

President's Report: Neal Kushner reported that he had received the Fred Fish disk collection on CD-ROM. He discussed costs for future upgrades as more Fred Fish Disk CDs become available. Neal is also on the lookout for a new virus checker that he can start distributing.

Director of Public Relations' Report: Ed Berger reported on the successful printing of the PCG's information in the latest AC's Guide to the Amiga. John Mulcahy proposed to Ed and the rest of the board that we include our official Commodore User Group Number in all group publications and on the BBS.

Members at Large Reports: Richard Bilonick reported on further hardships on contacting the AVideo Magazine. A group deal with CDR Systems for hardware purchases was discussed.

Sean Peck reported on the exchange of Newsletters with other User Groups. He also followed up on his proposal to catalogue the equipment that the PCG owns. He was instructed to make out an official inventory form for records keeping.

BBS Sysop's Report: John Mulcahy reported that the new software was up and running. John also proposed that he make available on the BBS a system whereby a new user can leave his name & other information and receive two complimentary issues of the PCG Newsletter. John also asked the Board Members if they could call at least once a week to pick up their private mail. He also has files Disks for Neal that were removed from the Hard Drive in order to free up space.

New Business: Richard Bilonick proposed that we include a disk with our Newsletter. Reg Ney is going to check into the exact mailing costs involved.

John Mulcahy told Neal Kushner that he was willing to donate the old 1200 baud modem that used to run the BBS to the group's rental items.

This concludes the minutes. In attendance were the following people:

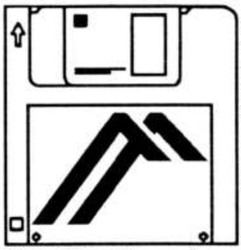
Neal Kushner	President
Marilyn Richards	V.P. & Librarian
Ed Berger	Dir. of Pub. Relations
John Mulcahy	Secretary & BBS Sysop
Richard Bilonick	Member at Large
Sean Peck	Member at Large
Reg Ney	Past President ❑

Oops...

Our thanks to Frederick Potetz for the Santa Claus picture on the cover of the December *PCG Newsletter*. His name was inadvertantly omitted.

The Amiga Librarian

by Neal R. Kushner



We have 20 new Fred Fish disks this month for your PD pleasure. You will find a list of video tapes and books that you can rent from the club at the PCG store table at the meeting. If you have books or hardware that is sitting around your house not doing anything donate it to the club and you will get rental credit for it. Please no software, we WILL NOT RENT SOFTWARE. If you have software that is P.D., and not on the Fish disks, like pictures or little utilities you've done please donate them to the library.

We are still trying to complete our Fred Fish library. We have all the disks from 1 to 580 except 481-499 and 551-560. We should have them soon.

Here are very brief descriptions of the disks offered this month.

Disk 561:

PPLib	A shared library for PowerPacker. This is ver 35.255.
PPMore	This is ver 2.0.
PPShow	Ver 2.0.
ReqTools	A standard Amiga shared runtime library. Ver 1.0a.
SuperDuper	A very fast disk copier and formatter. Ver 2.0.
ToolsDeamon	Run programs from the tools menu of WB 2.0. Ver 1.0.

Disk 562:

CLIsizer	Allows you to resize the WorkBench. Ver 1.0.
Degrader	Degrades your machine to get badly written programs to work. Ver 1.0.
Filer	An excellent shareware filemanager. Needs KS 2.0.
Fkeys	Adds window and screen switching functions. Ver 1.1.
Intuisup	A shared library. Ver 2.0.
ShowGuru	Recognizes 168 guru numbers and translates. Ver 2.1.b.

Disk 563:

bBaseII	A simple database program. Ver 5.0.
Kpri	Another NEC-p6 intuition frontend. Req ADOS 2.0. Ver 2.0.
M2Midi	A Modula-2 interface to B B's v2.0 "midi.lib". Ver 1.03.
Menu2Asm	A module for A+L AG's Modula-2. Ver 1.0.
MidiKeyboard	Play MIDI keyboards via mouse or computer keyboard. Req B B's "midi.library" V2.0. Ver 1.0.
ReqLibrary	A M2 interface to C F's & B D's "req.library" v2.5. Ver 1.01.

Disk 564:

ALoad	Like XWin's XLoad display load-factor. Req KS 2.0. Ver 1.1b.
DisKey	A sector oriented disk monitor. Ver 2.1.
DoPro	Patches the intuition OpenScreen. ver 1.5.
MSCalendar	A calendar utility and a MemoryClock. KS2.0 ok. Ver 1.10.

Disk 565:

AddMenu	Add infinite menus to the Tools menu on Wb V2.0. Ver 1.56.
CanDoDemos	Demos of the capabilities of CanDo.
PCompress	A program for most compression requirements. Ver 5.1.
SysInfo	Reports info about your machine. Ver 2.51.

Disk 566:

AM	Algorithmic music generator. Req. OS 2.0. Ver 1.1.
ApfelKiste	Mandelbrot program.
Bomber	Ami ver of Mac game "Bombs". Req OS 2.0. Ver 1.2.
FoCo	Format controller. Req OS 2.0. Ver 1.1.

Disk 567:

AmigaMail	Source code from CATS. Sept 1990 to Nov 1991.
AutoCLI	A 'DMouse' for WB 2.0. Ver 2.06.
DiskPrint	Prints disk labels. Ver 3.4.3.
MouseAideDEMO	A demo ver of a "Mouse" utility. Ver v2.56a.
SetRamsey	Test RAMSEY chip on 3000. Ver 1.50.

Disk 568:

CalorieBase	Provides a caloric and fat count. Ver 1.1.
Schoonschip	An algebraic manipulation program. Ver 5-Oct-91.
VMK	Virus detector/killer. Ver 1.10.

Disk 569:

PPLoadSeg	Patch loadseg to recognize PowPr files. Ver 1.1.
SonicArranger	Demo ver of a music program. Ver 1.36b.
Spliner	A spline screen blanker.
TrackMaster	A tool to create selfbooting trackdisk. Ver 1.7.

Disk 570:

DirWork	A DirUtility. Ver 1.43.
Fass	Reassign the FONTS: dir. Ver 1.02.
GadToolsBox	Draw/edit GadTools gadgets and menus. Ver 1.0.
MenuLock	"lock" the menu strip of a window. Ver 1.01.
View	A text displayer. Ver 1.5.

Disk 571:

AutoCLI	A 'DMouse' for WB 2.0. Ver 2.12.
CPUSet	A assembler utility.
Gwin	Graphics WINdow shared library. Ver 2.0.
MemClear	Diag info on CHIP & FAST RAM frag. Ver 1.05.
SysInfo	Reports info about your machine. Ver 2.53.

Disk 572:

CrossFade	Hack that crossfades between screens.
Multiplot	An intuitive data plotting program.
ResetHandler	CTRL-Amiga-Amiga counts 9 to 0 then resets. Ver 1.0.
WBStart	Emulates the WorkBench startup procedure. Ver 1.0.

Disk 573:

MathPlot	Another function plotter. Req KS2.0.
MToolLibrary	A shared library for the Amiga. Ver 2.20.
MultiPlayer	Music player program. Ver 1.11a.
Plasma	Generate Plasma Cloud Fractals. Ver X.x.
Plotter	A program to plot math functions. This is V3.98.

Disk 574:

Chemesthetics	Draws molecules using the calotte model. Ver 2.10.
DiskSpeed	A disk speed testing program. Ver 4.1.
MKSLens	Magnifies a small area surrounding the pointer.
NewZAP	File sector editing utility. Ver 3.3. 2.0 compat.

Disk 575:

AmigaToNTSC	AmigaToNTSC patches graphics.library. Ver 1.0.
DataPlot	Plots data and algebraic functions in 2D. Ver 2.16.
PPLib	A shared library for PowerPacker. Ver 35.256.
ReqTools	A standard Amiga shared runtime library. Ver 1.0b.

Disk 576:

Analyzer	Examine representations of electrical signals. Ver 1.0.

Budget	Help with managing personal finances. Ver 1.3.4.
TermII	A telecommunication program. Req 2.0. Ver 1.1.

Disk 577:

LhA	An archiver. Ver 1.0.
OwnDevUnit	The OwnDevUnit.library programmer's pack.
PetersQuest	A cute game. Ver 1.2.
TurboQuantum	A SCSI bit twiddler program.

Disk 578:

Spice3	A circuit analysis program. Req 1 MB. Ver 3e2.

Disk 579:

BinToHunk	Convert a raw data file to Hunk file. Ver 1.0.
Cass	Cassette Cover Printer V1.1.
OctaMED	A music editor Ver 2.0.

Disk 580:

WorldDataBank	Plots world maps. Ver 2.2.

After the main meeting I will be available to go through the Fish disks if anyone is interested.

PRICES THIS MONTH FOR MEMBERS WITH CARD

Amiga disk of the month $3 1st, $2 2nd.

3 1/2"blank Sony disks DSDD $.70 ea

If you know what you want please call and leave an order at 828-3505 between 9am to 9pm by the Friday before the meeting. This will greatly help speed up your delivery.

If you have any demo disks or pd disks please help us share them with other members. Thanks. So until the meeting, see you.

Your Humble Amiga Librarian,
Neal R Kushner

BBS News

by John Mulcahy

The bbs software has been changed! Unless you are deaf dumb & blind, or haven't called in the last month, you will have noticed that we are up and running new software. This change in software fits in just fine because this month at the main meeting I am going to be demoing the new software and will be on hand to answer all questions.

With the software change, I have been constantly adding & implementing new features. Do I like the new software? YES I DO! I can implement newer features with ease that I never even dreamed of! Keep your eyes on the menus as I am ready to go.

Fidonet will be back up hopefully by the time you read this. I have about 300k worth of documentation to go through before I even think of setting things up. I am sort of ready to set it up now, but I think I will get this article in first & give the editors a chance to get the articles off the BBS and do their thing before I start playing around with Fido.

In case you haven't read my login screen, I am selling printed versions of the online manuals at the January meeting or I can mail it to you. Cost is $1.00 at the meeting or $2.00 if you want it mailed to you. Let me know on the BBS if you are interested in a manual. I will be bringing some extra to the meeting but not that many...

That's about all I wanted to go over this month. See you Sunday and bring your questions!

Sneak Preview for next month's article: Details on how to download plus insight into the full screen editor!

-Sysop- ❑

EQUIPMENT AVAILABLE FOR RENT

BOOKS
$30 Deposit-$2/month

C64 Prog Ref Guide
Assm Lng for Kids C64
Basic C64 Basic
Serious Prog C64
The Whole PET Catlg
The Home Cmptr Wars
Mastering the C64
Compute!'s 1st C64
Compute!'s C64 Graph
C64 Games Book
Data Structs and C Ps
C as 2nd Language

VIDEO TAPES
$30 Deposit-$2/month

CA-The New Art Possible
CA-DTP WorkStation Tutr
CA-Creative People
CA-Bringing Power Home
CA-Amiga Video
AW-Anim Video II
MPI-Comp Anim Magic
MPI-Comp Dreams
Todd Rundgren Speaks
LA Siggraph 1991
AMV-Oct 1990
AMV-Nov 1990
AMV-Dec/Jan 1991
AMV-Apr 1991

HARDWARE
Price Variable

C64-1650 Automodem 300 Bd.
$2/m

Rental items are available as a service to current members only and can be picked up at PCG meetings or by appointment by calling 828-3505 before 10pm. All materials are due at the following meeting. The borrower is responsible for all loss or damage to the materials or their equipment. Deposit checks will be held and returned to you when the items are returned to us. If we determine that the materials are damaged or will not be returned, your deposit check will be cashed. The borrower agrees to pay the deposit plus any necessary collection costs for repair/replacement of damaged materials.

Amiga News

by Rick Bilonick

Amiga Animations on View at The Carnegie Museum of Art

Paul Glabicki is a professor of studio art at the University of Pittsburgh. He has been involved in film animation since 1968. His latest animation explorations now use Amiga computers and are on display at The Carnegie Museum of Art's Forum in Oakland. The exhibit includes 6 video displays, two connected to video tape recorders playing prerecorded animations and the other four connected to Amiga 2000/2500's displaying real-time animations. Although Glabicki has used Deluxe Paint III and IV to produce these animations, they are quite unlike anything usually produced with commercial software. Glabicki feels that artists must push commercial software packages to do things they were never intended to do. He has achieved his goal. His animations must be seen to be appreciated and are difficult to describe. They are abstract in nature, complex and interesting. Also displayed are some of the artist's non-computer art works. Commodore Business Machines donated an Amiga for the display and CDR Systems of Swissvale, Pennsylvania (i.e. Kim Cannon!) also provided Amigas. The exhibit runs from December 14 to February 9 - don't miss it!

Imagine 2.0 Now Shipping

Impulse is now shipping Imagine 2.0, the latest version of its spectacular 3D ray tracing / animation software. Version 2.0 sports a completely new 300+ page manual and WorkBench 2.0 look and feel. A new Preferences editor has been added to the original five editors (Project, Detail, Forms, Cycle, and Stage). In addition, the Action editor has been separated from the Stage editor. Too many other changes have been made to list here. Look for a review of Imagine 2.0 in the February issue of the PCG Newsletter. Imagine 2.0 can be ordered from Impulse by calling 1-800-328-0184.

Amiga Sales

It took 48 months to sell the first 1,000,000 Amigas (1986-89), 16 months to sell the second 1,000,000 and just 12 months to sell the third 1,000,000 (as of October, 1991). Can 4,000,000 sales be far away? If the trend continues, this should occur around June or July of this year.

Amiga Aladdin Now Available on GEnie

If you subscribe to GEnie (General Electric Network for Information Exchange), make sure to download a copy of the GEnie Amiga Aladdin software. Amiga Aladdin Version 1.0 is a new front end program to make the most efficient use of the features and services on GEnie. Quoting from the comprehensive 88 page User's Manual: "With a GEnie account and access to the GEnie network, Aladdin can automate all the normal functions of accessing and drawing information from GEnie and the various services within it. By handling most of the repetitive tasks within GEnie, Aladdin can save you a considerable amount of time and money in the form of reduced access and online charges. The concept behind Aladdin is to take the tasks which are associated with using the RoundTable and GEmail services on GEnie and integrate them into a software package which acts as an interface between the user and the GEnie system. You tell Aladdin what actions you want to take and prepare messages off-line at no cost to you in the form of access and connect charges. Aladdin then executes all the tasks you ask it to do in a minimum of time, reducing greatly the monthly charges on your GEnie account.

If you don't subscribe to GEnie, you can apply for an account as follows: Instruct your communications or terminal program or modem to dial 1-800-638-8369. If you are using Aladdin's Terminal Mode with a Hayes or compatible modem, you can enter Terminal Mode and type the modem command "ATDT1-800-638-8369" and then press the <RETURN> key. When your modem achieves a connection, type the letter "H" three times, pausing for a moment between each "H" (no more than one second and no less than one-tenth of a second). GEnie will respond with a "U#=" prompt. At this time type "XJM11957,GENIE" and press the <RETURN> key. Follow the instructions on the screen to apply for an account.

How Time Flies!

AC's Tech for the Commodore Amiga and AmigaWorld's Tech Journal have both begun their second year of publication. Volume 2 Number 1 of AC's Tech has a very practical article on a (relatively) easy to build and inexpensive SCSI Interface for adding hard drives (or other SCSI peripherals) to your Amiga 500 or 1000. Volume 2 Number 1 of the Tech Journal has an interesting article on JPEG compression for squeezing graphics files. It does a great job of explaining and illustrating how JPEG works.❏

Amiga SIG News

by Rick Bilonick

Last month, our "beloved" President, Neal Kushner demonstrated CDTV. Neal demonstrated the CDTV's interface and also showed how to use CDTV as an Amiga with a floppy drive and keyboard in addition to the CD-ROM drive.

This month, the PCG's Bulletin Board System Sysop (system operator) John Mulcahy (also the PCG's Secretary) will demonstrate how to access and use the PCG's Bulletin Board System (BBS). In the past, the BBS used various software packages: BBS-PC and Paragon. Now we're using a package called DLG. John will explain how to navigate the system on your Amiga at the Sunday, January 19 SIG meeting.

At the February 16 meeting I will be demonstrating Imagine 2.0 and the FireCracker 24. Both products are produced by Impulse, Inc. Imagine 2.0 is the latest version of Impulse's very popular 3D ray tracing and animation package. Now Imagine supports 24-bit graphics (16.7 million color graphics) - but without a 24-bit graphics card the best you can do is see a 12-bit (4,096 colors) HAM interpretation (which, however, is much better than 256 color VGA). The FireCracker 24 (FC24) card is one of a large number of 24-bit cards introduced for the Amiga this past year. The FC24 is designed to be used with Imagine - but can be used to view and manipulate standard 24-bit graphic files using Light-24 - a fully interactive 24-bit paint system.

I hope to see everyone at the January meeting! ❏

Using PageStream

Productivity and Printing

by Bill Raecke

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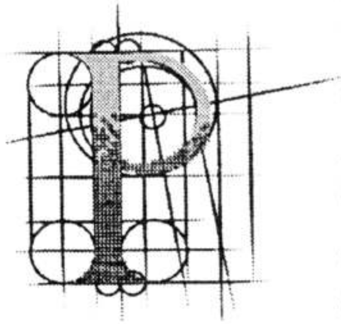
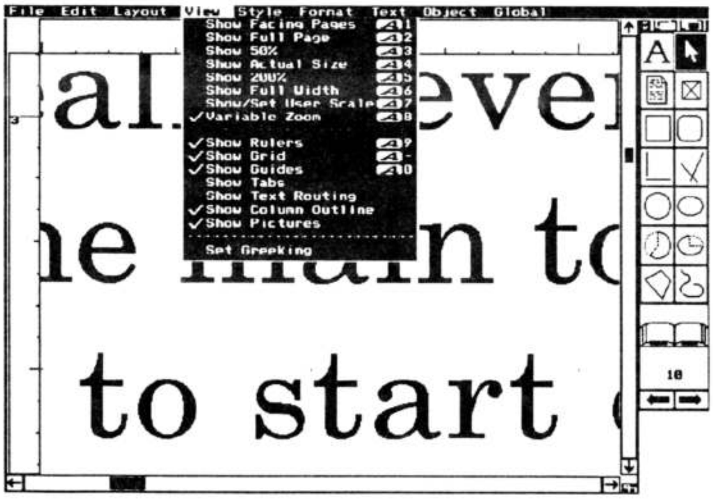
This month's chapter in the Using PageStream series will cover two topics -- and when we're done, the series will be complete. So far we've covered fonts, graphics and general document handling. Next we need to cover a few of the productivity features included in PageStream or what I like to call "Things to make your life easier".

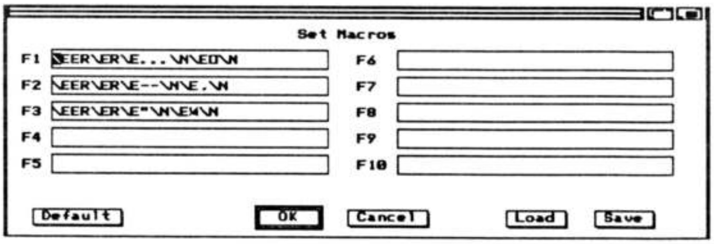


The first productivity feature is PageStream's "View" capabilities. PageStream has much more powerful document viewing options than I have seen in other programs. There is a "View" menu that controls what you see or don't see on the screen. The amount of a document visible on the screen can vary from two facing pages to a 1500% magnification. (The accompanying screen shot shows a 1500% magnification of a few lines of text from last month's MCCC newsletter.) In addition, rulers, grid lines, bit-mapped graphics, tabs, column outlines, etc. can all be turned on or off. Another feature you will notice on this menu is the "Set Greeking" item. "Greeking" refers to the practice of NOT displaying text on the screen below a certain point size. Be aware that in this instance, point size refers to the number of vertical points that a character occupies on the screen -- it has nothing to do with the point size of the text that was selected for use in the document. As you zoom out to look at more of your page at a time, the letters get smaller and smaller on the screen. When they pass the "Greeking" point, PageStream will no longer try to show you an accurate representation of what the characters will look like. The idea is that beyond a certain point, they will become illegible anyway. All that PageStream will show beyond that point is a series of lines that will show the position of the characters on the page. But for those running PageStream on a 68000 based Amiga there is an additional use for this feature. It is much easier for PageStream to show "Greeked" text than it is to display a WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) representation. So to speed up those displays, set the "Greeking" to a higher point size and use WYSIWYG only when editing text.



Now let's talk about the "bleed area". Every page in a PageStream document has a bleed area -- but, by default, when a new document is created, the bleed area is set to the same size as the page itself. In order to see and use the bleed area, you need to adjust its size after the document is created. Under the "Layout" menu is an item called "Set Page Dimensions". Selecting this item will bring up a requester where you can re-size both the page and the associated bleed area. Note that changing sizes here will affect every page in the document. But also note that each page has a separate bleed area so it cannot be used as a general Pasteboard as in some other publishers. What is a bleed area? It really has two uses. A graphic or block of text can extend into the bleed area if desired so that a portion will not be printed. A more common use is simply to have a place to put objects as they are being rearranged on the page.

One of the most important productivity features in this or any other productivity program is Macros. A "Macro" is simply a way that a program provides a user to establish a set of standard functions which can be performed in sequence at the press of a key. A program gets measured in this regard by how many macros it can support, how easy they are to set up, and how easy they are to use. PageStream doesn't handle macros as well as it should but at least they are there -- unlike some desktop publishers -- and they can save you lots of time if you learn to use them and use them wisely. Let's cover the three aspects in turn. First, the number of macros. The number of macros is virtually unlimited, but you are allowed to have just ten active at a time. Macros are stored on disk in sets of up to ten. One of those sets can be designated as the "default" so that it gets loaded automatically at boot-up time. The remainder can be loaded in as desired. To set them up, you must enter commands from the PageStream scripting language into text gadgets. To use them you press the appropriate function key.



F1 \EER\ER\E...\N\ED\N
F2 \EER\ER\E--\N\E.\N
F3 \EER\ER\E"\N\EM\N
F4
F5
F6
F7
F8
F9
F10

If this were a review I would be pointing out that ten is far too few macros to have active at one time, that entering data using an obscure script language is far too difficult a procedure and serves to reduce the value of macros in general, and that access by function key is far too limiting and obscure (What was it that F5 was supposed to do again? Can't tell by looking at the Macro Requester 'cause it's written in some silly script language!) I would point out that TurboText has an extremely powerful macro processor with NO limit on the number of macros available, automatic recording of all actions to build a macro, and macro naming so that you don't forget what it does. If this were a review I would recommend to SoftLogik that they try to emulate what Oxxi has provided in TurboText. But this isn't a review... so I won't go into all that. Besides, I'm being a little unfair comparing a desktop publisher to a text editor. What I will mention is that using the macros provided, even just ten of them, can save you lots of work -- and if you only use a few, they are easy enough to remember. I use macros to do the standard search and replace actions that I do on every document that I bring into PageStream -- such as replacing the double dash with an em-dash or replacing the dreaded three periods with the elipsis character.

No discussion of PageStream or any desktop publishing package would be complete without covering printing. After all, the whole point of a desktop publisher is to print a document. PageStream offers the most versatile printing capabilities of any program I have seen -- on any platform. Its major strength lies in the fact that all printers are treated equally. Other publishing programs limit some features to Postscript only... in fact some limit printing to Postscript exclusively (Saxon Publisher). But before we get into some of those capabilities and how to best use them we need a short (I hope) discussion on printers in general. Hopefully this will help clear up some of the misconceptions that many people have.

There are many kinds of printers available in today's market, but they can be thought of as being just two basic types. The oldest, and one rarely used any more, is the daisy-wheel printer. This was the original "letter quality" printer. It uses preformed characters like a typewriter to achieve a high quality print. It became popular in the days when there was no other option to achieve letter quality type. In today's market it is simply too limiting to be of much use. The same quality can be achieved more quickly and quietly using newer technology. But once we get beyond daisy-wheel printers there is just one kind left. Everything else is a "dot-matrix" printer. Now I know that this comes as a shock to a lot of people because over the years we have become accustomed to thinking in terms of daisy-wheel and dot-matrix where dot-matrix really meant "impact". That is because the first dot-matrix printers were, in fact, impact printers. Characters on an impact printer are formed by pins striking a ribbon which, in turn, strikes the paper making a mark. Today's 9-pin and 24-pin printers are impact printers. They are also dot-matrix, true -- but so is everything else. Inkjet printers are dot-matrix printers. Laser printers are dot-matrix printers. And yes, even Postscript printers are dot-matrix printers. The only real difference between any of these printers is the number of dots per inch they are capable of producing and how they can place those dots on the paper. (I'm belaboring the point because I'm going to try to dispel a bit of the mystique involved with the word "Postscript". More on that later.)

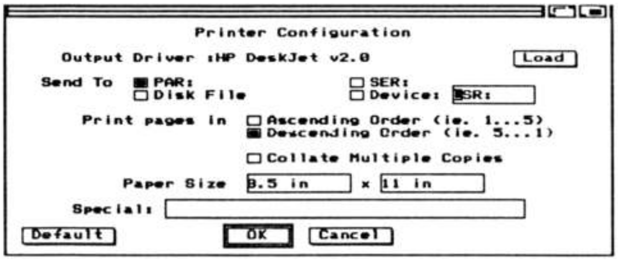
At the bottom of the printer scale are the nine-pin and 24-pin impact printers. Now, I am quite aware that many of today's impact printers are capable of "360 dots per inch" (dpi). All things being equal, that would make them more capable than laser printers which print at 300 dpi. But all things are not equal. The fact is, when an impact printer is printing at its highest density, the marks that it is putting on the paper overlap. The pins themselves are far too big to strike the paper in a different spot 360 times in the space of a single inch. What they do is to go over the same area, offset just slightly, and strike again until they have managed to strike or skip 360 spots in that linear inch thereby giving them the "360 dpi" capability... but don't believe it. The next up on the printer scale is the inkjet printer -- the Hewlett Packard DeskJet being the premier example. Inkjet printers are capable of up to 300 dpi. This is a true 300 dpi. The printer is capable of squirting up to 300 separate and non-overlapping dots of ink in the space of a single linear inch. The only drawbacks to an inkjet printer are that the starting and stopping action of the paper feed mechanism tends to cause banding effects when doing graphics, and that the ink will soak into the paper somewhat causing those precisely placed dots to run together just a little, thereby reducing the effective resolution to something a little less than a 300 dpi output. (This effect can be minimized by the careful selection of the proper paper.) At the top of the printer scale are the laser printers -- both Postscript and non- Postscript. A typical laser printer for home use produces a true 300 dpi output.

You may have noticed just now that I lumped all laser printers, both Postscript and non-Postscript, together. You will also notice that both types produce the same resolution -- 300 dpi. So what is the difference? The difference is simply how information is sent to the printer. When using a Postscript printer, information is sent to the printer as text. A Postscript print file is simply an ASCII text file that contains a series of commands and information which the Postscript printer interprets and turns into a dot-matrix which is then printed. With a non-Postscript printer, the appropriate calculations have to be performed in the computer by the desktop publishing package (or Postscript interpreter such as PixelScript or Post) and then sent to the printer as a dot-matrix.

I've gone into all this build-up simply to make a point. You will read statements again and again to the effect that a Postscript printer is the best printer that money can buy and that everyone should want one. Since a Postscript printer is just a dot-matrix printer with the very same resolution as either a normal laser printer or a DeskJet, the question needs to be asked, "Why is Postscript better?" After all, the extra money that it costs to buy a Postscript printer -- with its own CPU, Postscript interpreter and 2 megabytes of RAM -- could easily be used by most of us for other purposes. A Postscript printer can cost double what a normal laser printer costs. And a normal laser printer will cost about double what a HP DeskJet costs. The question is whether a Postscript printer is worth the difference in price to you as a PageStream user. And to be able to answer that question you need to know the advantages that a Postscript printer offers. Here are the major differences. 1) If you are working professionally you will be sending your work out to a service bureau for final reproduction on a 1200 dpi or greater device. These devices understand and expect Postscript data. The ability to test at home on your own Postscript printer before you send it out will save a bunch of time, money and frustration. 2) The print quality of a Postscript printer will generally be slightly better than what PageStream currently produces on its own. There is no particular reason for this other than the fact that Soft-Logik needs to work a little on their print algorithms. But you need to look awfully close to see the difference. For most of us the differences are slight enough that they don't matter. 3) A Postscript printer will normally print much faster than will PageStream on a 68000 based Amiga. Of course, if that is your only reason for wanting a Postscript printer your money would probably be better spent on a 68030 accelerator card.

But we started out talking about PageStream and what its printing capabilities are. Simply put, PageStream will produce output on virtually any printer at the highest resolution that printer is capable of producing. Leave the jaggies on the screen. The output will be remarkably crisp. But we are all PageStream users already aren't we? We already know that. What I need to point out are a few of the special features that may have gone unnoticed.

Under the "Global" menu is an item called "Configure Printer". This is the place where you originally set up your printer as the default. One thing worth taking note of is the option of where to send the print output. If you need more than one copy of a page, it is usually faster to output the print file to hard disk rather than directly to the printer. You can then send that file to the printer as many times as needed. Be aware that these print files are large -- be sure you have lots of disk space. One page will normally fit on a floppy, but just barely. (Of course, if you are using a floppy the speed gain will probably be negated



Output Driver :HP DeskJet v2.0

Send To ☒ PAR: ☐ Disk File ☐ SER: ☐ Device: SR:

Print pages in ☐ Ascending Order (ie. 1...5) ☒ Descending Order (ie. 5...1)

☐ Collate Multiple Copies

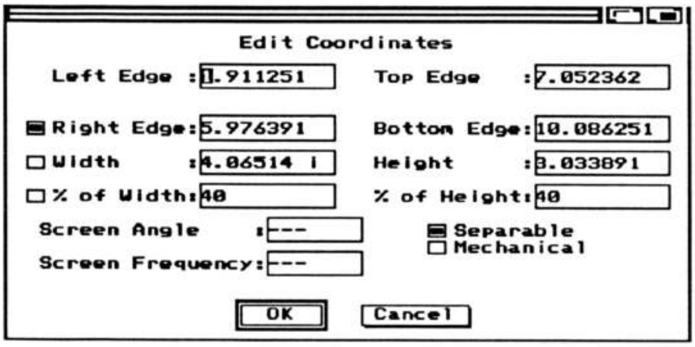
Paper Size 8.5 in x 11 in

Special:

anyway.) To print a file that has been "printed" to disk, go to the CLI and type TYPE >PAR: <filename>. Note that the file must be sent to PAR: and not to PRT:. Anything you send to PRT: is filtered through your Preferences printer driver which attempts to create printer control information. The print file created by PageStream already is in a format understood by your printer and doesn't need any further modification.

There is another use for the "Print to Disk" option if you happen to use an HP DeskJet as I do. In the club library and on the MCCC BBS is a program called FastJet. FastJet is a program that you can set up to run in the background. Use the command RUN FASTJET PIPE:A and FastJet will wait in the background looking for a file called "A" to appear in the PIPE: device. Print your page (or set of pages) to PIPE:, filename "A", and FastJet will take the raw printer data and convert it to the HP compressed format before sending it to the printer. Results will vary depending on the amount of data on the page but on a typical page (page 12 from the August MCCC News), the print time decreased from 1 minute and 18 seconds to just 58 seconds. Pages with less information on them are sped up even more. (Note that the effect with a standard DeskJet will be less dramatic than with a DeskJet Plus or DeskJet 500.)

Another thing that I need to cover is halftones. Halftone is a method used to simulate gray-scales when printing a bit-mapped graphic. If you select the "Edit Coordinates" item in the "Object" menu when you have a bitmap selected, you will see a couple of options that are used to control the halftone -- look for "Screen Angle" and "Screen Frequency". By default both text gadgets will contain three dashes. This means that PageStream will select what it thinks are the best halftone options for your picture and your printer. But you can control those options here if you know what you're doing, and perhaps improve the output in the process. Before you can do that you need to know a little about halftones. Picture a four by four grid. Within that grid we have the option of coloring or leaving blank any of the individual sections. Since our grid is four by four we could leave them all white, we could fill in one section, two sections... or as many as all sixteen sections. This is the way a halftone works. If our printer can print 300 dpi and we want to have a four by four grid so that we can have the full sixteen gray shades that the Amiga is capable of, we will set our "Screen Frequency" to 75. The "Screen Frequency" is nothing more than a simulated resolution. If we set the frequency to 75, we will get an apparent resolution of 75 dpi -- but within that 75 dpi we will have the capability of sixteen shades of gray because our printer is still really producing 300 dpi. Is it beginning to make a little sense? In other words, if our printer produces 300 dpi and we set the "Screen Frequency" to 60, we will have a five by five grid yielding 25 shades of gray. If we set frequency to 150 we will have a 2 by 2 grid which gives us four shades of gray. A frequency of 300 will produce a pure black and white picture because we have just one section in our grid. (This is a setting that yields very legible screen-shots whenever shading is not important.) The things to remember are that the dpi of your printer must be an even multiple of your selected "Screen Frequency" and that the lower the "Screen Frequency" the lower the apparent resolution -- but the greater the number of possible gray shades. It's a trade-off. But by making an informed decision concerning resolution vs. number of colors you can sometimes improve the quality of your output. The other control,



Left Edge :1.911251 Top Edge :7.052362

☒ Right Edge:5.976391 Bottom Edge:10.086251

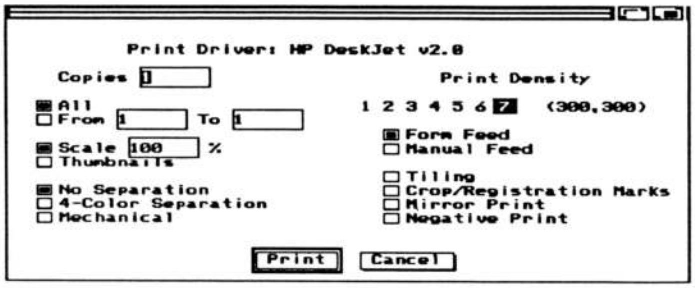
☐ Width :4.06514 Height :3.033891

☐ % of Width:40 % of Height:40

Screen Angle :---

Screen Frequency:---

☒ Separable ☐ Mechanical



Print Driver: HP DeskJet v2.0

Copies 1

☒ All ☐ From 1 To 1

☒ Scale 100 % ☐ Thumbnails

☒ No Separation ☐ 4-Color Separation ☐ Mechanical

Print Density 1 2 3 4 5 6 [✓ 7] (300,300)

☒ Form Feed ☐ Manual Feed

☐ Tiling ☐ Crop/Registration Marks ☐ Mirror Print ☐ Negative Print

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Stores Displaying PCG Newsletter

The following stores carry products of interest to PCG members and provide an outlet for our newsletters:

B. Dalton Books (South Hills Village Mall) - Books, magazines, and Amiga disk magazines.
Border's Books (Norman Center II - near South Hills Village) - Books and magazines.
CDR Systems (Washington St., Swissvale, PA) - Amiga hardware, software, and magazines.
Pittsburgh Computer Store (Rt. 51 near Century III Mall) - Amiga hardware, software, books, and magazines.
Waldenbooks (South Hills Village) - Books and magazines.
Games and Gadgets (Century III Mall) - Amiga, C64/128 software.
Electroniques Boutiques (Ross Park Mall) - Amiga, C64/128 software.
Babbages (South Hills Village) - C64/128 software.
Babbages (Ross Park Mall) - C64/128 software.
Micromaster (Aliquippa, PA) - Amiga hardware and software.
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Carnegie Libraries (all branches) - PCG Newsletter.
Babbages (Century III Mall) C64/128 software.
Sun Appliance Stores (all stores) - Amigas.

Understanding Your Amiga

Installing a custom icon for the RAM disk device

by Harold Williams

Reprinted with the premission of Metroplex Commodore Computer Club

The Amiga WorkBench supplies a default disk icon for disks that do not have a custom icon. The default icon is a simple square with one corner cut off. The standard Amiga boot procedure creates a RAM disk device but does not create a custom icon. Replacing the resulting default icon with a more elegant picture will enhance the appearance of your WorkBench. It is a simple procedure to provide a custom icon for floppy disks and hard disks. The RAM disk is a problem because it does not exist except while the Amiga is running. Learning to modify the RAM disk icon is a useful project. Your WorkBench will look better and you will develop a better understanding of how the Amiga operates.

The Background

The Amiga checks each available disk for a file named "Disk.info" in the disk's root directory. If such a file exists and is a valid disk icon file, then the Amiga WorkBench will display the icon image stored in the file and associate it with the disk. Note that the naming convention for disk icon files is different from the naming convention for other Amiga icons. Tool, Project, Drawer, and Garbage icon files have names that match the associated object name with the suffix ".info" added. The disk icon is always named "Disk.info" regardless of the name of the disk. If you have a disk with a custom icon that you would like to use with another disk, transferring the icon image is as simple as copying the "Disk.info" file from one disk to another. The file copy can be done with the Amiga Shell using the AmigaDOS "copy" command or can be done with a file utility program. After the file copy has been completed the new disk image will not appear on WorkBench until the Amiga operating system notices the change. To make this happen with a floppy disk remove the disk from the drive and then re-insert it. A disk icon on a hard drive will require a re-boot to make it appear on WorkBench. During the boot procedure the Amiga looks for a file named Startup-Sequence in the S: device. The default Startup-Sequence includes the command "LoadWB delay". This command activates the Amiga WorkBench. When WorkBench is activated it looks for the "Disk.info" file on each available disk device. If the disk icon file is found, then the custom icon image is displayed on WorkBench. This procedure will not work with the RAM disk because there is no physical disk to remove and then re-insert, and a re-boot will clear all files stored in the RAM disk including the "Disk.info" file.

Understanding the above procedure is the key to installing a custom icon for the RAM device. A "Disk.info" file must be placed in the RAM disk before the command "LoadWB" occurs during the boot procedure. This can only be done by modifying the Startup-Sequence file. If you are not accustomed to changing your Startup-Sequence be aware that this is the heart of the Amiga's boot procedure. If you break the Startup-Sequence, the Amiga will not complete the boot procedure and you may find yourself in desperate need of a friend who is familiar with Startup-Sequence modification. If youboot from a floppy, then this modification is not so dangerous. Make a copy of your boot disk and modify the copy. If you boot from a hard drive, you should make a copy of your Startup-Sequence. You will have to modify the file named "Startup-Sequence", but the copy can be used to recover the original file if your modifications are faulty.

Getting It Done

Here is the procedure for creating a custom RAM disk icon. 1) Create or obtain an appropriate "Disk.info" file. You can create a disk icon using IconEd found in the Tools drawer on your Extras disk or WorkBench disk. IconMaster by John Scheib is a much better icon editor and is available from the MCCC library and the MCCC BBS. But you do not have to create your own icon! You will find a huge number of icon images in the MCCC library and on the MCCC BBS. 2) Copy the "Disk.info" file to your system disk. If you copy it to the root directory of your system disk it will become the icon image for your system disk. This is probably not desirable. There are two solutions. First, do not name it "Disk.info". Name it something like "RAMDisk.info". This will keep the Amiga operating system from seeing it as a disk icon file. Secondly, you could copy the file to a place other than the root directory of your system disk. A good place would be S:. 3) Modify your Startup-Sequence to copy the icon file to RAM:. Modifying your Startup-Sequence requires the use of a text editor. MEmacs can be found in the Tools drawer. Textra by Mike Haas is a little easier to use and is available from the library or the BBS. You must add the copy command ahead of the line that reads "LoadWB delay". The safest place is the line directly above the "LoadWB" command. If your copy command fails you can execute the "LoadWB" and "EndCLI" commands directly on the CLI and you will find your Amiga ready to work as usual. If you placed the disk icon on your system disk and named it "RAMDisk.info", the copy command you should place in your Startup-Sequence is "Copy SYS:RAMDisk.info To RAM:Disk.info". If you placed the disk icon in S: with the name "Disk.info", you should use the command "Copy S:Disk.info To RAM:". You should not type the quotation marks for the above commands. Save the modified Startup-Sequence. 4) Cross your fingers and re-boot your system. *[Make sure all disk drive lights have gone out first! It's easy to reboot too early in this situation. --ed.]*

Modifying the appearance of the disk icons on your WorkBench can be the first step in creating a WorkBench environment that is personalized to your taste. Customizing the RAM disk icon requires a little more work than other disk icons. But, it is a project that will enhance the appearance of your WorkBench and you will learn more about the inner workings of your Amiga. ❑

...Continued from page 9

"Screen Angle" controls the pattern of the dots within the grid. Unless you are using a very low screen frequency relative to the printer resolution you are unlikely to notice any effect when this setting is changed.

I think that's it. The rest of the print functions are (I think) self evident or adequately covered in the documentation. As a matter of fact, I think that's it for the series. I hope that some of the things that I have covered have helped make a few things a little easier. Don't think that this is the end, however. Soft-Logik is currently advertising PageStream 2.2. Be on the lookout for a review here when it hits. ❑

...Continued from Page 1

luck may be better in 1992!

Disk Repairs and Problems

GeoTerm is the GEOS terminal program, and isn't thought of as a 'disk repair' utility. The GeoGremlin corrupted two GeoWrite files on a #1581 disk. One file was corrupted enough that GeoWrite didn't recognize it as a GeoWrite file, and I couldn't even turn to the page with those files on the DeskTop. GEOS reported a disk error every time I tried turning to that page or validating the disk. GeoTerm can scratch files. I loaded GeoTerm on another drive and deleted the two bad files. Each time I deleted a bad file, a window informed me there was a disk error. Nothing about whether the file was scratched. I returned to the DeskTop and could turn to the page that had the corrupt files. They're gone, so GeoTerm worked. I successfully validated the disk, reclaimed almost 200K disk space, and the disk is fine.

A warning about GEOS validate vs. "normal" Commodore validate. A few months ago I had problems with another GEOS disk and it wouldn't validate. The GEOS manual warns not to use normal Commodore validate. GEOS files contain additional data not found in other C-files; normal Commodore DOS doesn't recognize that data and will improperly rewrite the directory. I thought I'd validate the disk using Commodore DOS, load GEOS and revalidate the disk, and have a quicker fix than copying all the files to another disk. Wrong. Commodore DOS validated the disk, but GEOS again reported a disk error when I attempted a GEOS validate. I deleted a file and GEOS reported the same amount of disk space used and available. I copied a large file to the disk, and GEOS reported the same used and "free" space as before. I was able to copy all GeoWrite files intact to another disk, but my "bright idea" did nothing but waste time.

Some operating systems or disk utilities are able to validate a bad disk and set aside any bad sectors so they aren't used. Commodore and GEOS DOS have an 'all or nothing' approach; the disk is OK, or the validation process stops once a bad sector is found.

Bad disks are a topic of debate. Some C-64 users say they've never had a bad disk; I've had many. I used to have frequent problems with one non-GEOS database program that used relative files. Once a month, the data disk went bad. Yesterday's backup data disk was also bad, and so on for several days' backups. A magazine article reported on the disk errors found with different brands of 5.25" disks. They purchased 100 of each brand, in boxes of 10, from different parts of the country. Some brands had a few errors, one famous brand name had an average of several errors per disk, and only one brand had no errors on any disk. That article was published 4 or 5 years ago, so results should be different today. It's odd that no one has tested floppies since then (or I missed it if they did.)

I switched to BASF disks and had no more problems. It seems to be the nature of the program and data, more than the disk. When I first got my C-64, I used the cheapest disks I could buy. Many are still in a disk file with old word processing files. My non-GEOS word processor, Pocket Writer, doesn't seem to care what I use for data. GEOS is fussier, but not as much as the database program. One PCG member was having frequent problems with GEOS files on his #1581 drive. He brought in some of the disks and they wouldn't read properly on other #1581 drives. When you format a disk using MS-DOS, it reports any bad sectors after it formats the disk. Jim Reedy formatted the disks on his PC to see if they were OK; each disk had several bad sectors. These were cheapy disks, and not worth even that price when you think of lost time and data.

New Software To Sell

I brought in about 75 new C-64 programs last month to sell at our flea market. These are mostly games from an area computer store. Several members wanted to know if I'd bring more in January when they'd have a fresh supply of spending money. I'll bring in the ones remaining and even a few different titles.

Error Correction

I was looking over past articles and discovered two errors of the, "I know what I meant but this is what I said" variety. In last June's article I said GEOS needed a laser printer equipped with Postscript. Not exactly. You can print a GeoWrite, GeoPublish, or GeoPaint file to several laser printers using the normal print menu, but the output is 80 d.p.i. Depending on the font and graphics, they'll have the usual jaggies. I haven't tried printing GeoFile or GeoCalc files with a laser printer but can't think of any reason why they wouldn't print. Drivers are available for several laser printers; these drivers may be compatible with other models and brands. If you want/need the 300 d.p.i. output as in this newsletter, you must use the GeoWrite or GeoPublish Postscript programs to print and the laser printer must be equipped with Postscript. Some programs on other computers print OK without Postscript, but remember, GEOS was written years ago based on 80 d.p.i. GeoLaser and GeoPubLaser use the Postscript fonts that reside in the laser printer's memory, so text is the same quality no matter what computer you're using.

Last month's article mentioned QwikPik and QwikStash utilities that automatically load your REU on bootup. The instructions say if QwikStash swaps drives, you must load the input driver (mouse, joystick, etc.) to the REU or the system will lock up after the REU is loaded. I said it wouldn't. Partially wrong. If your input driver is a joystick, it won't lock up. A mouse or other input device won't function. You could recover by using the keyboard to access the boot disk and load the input driver, but loading the input driver to the REU makes more sense. I usually use GEOS with a joystick, the same one I've had for years. The mouse is quicker, and I prefer a mouse with other systems, but I've stuck with the joystick for GEOS. The main reason is the mouse doesn't travel in a perfectly straight line. If you're checking the alignment of various elements, measuring with the "Ruler" DA, or drawing straight lines in GeoPublish or GeoPaint, the joystick is better. A second reason is that my workspace usually has notes, reference materials and "stuff" taking up space that the mousepad would need. ❑

Missing a few pages?

If you appear to be missing a few pages, like maybe all the pages between page 2 and page 11, then you are probably holding the complimentary demonstration copy of the *PCG Newsletter*. To get information on becoming a club member and receiving the complete PCG Newsletter in the mail ten times per year, read the information on page 2 and fill out the accompanying application. Please, join us!

Pittsburgh Commodore Group
P.O. BOX 16126
Pittsburgh, PA 15242

An Organization whose purpose is to foster the understanding and enjoyment of personal computers.

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Suffering from the computer confusion blues? ***PCG*** can be just the prescription you need. No question is too simple or too complex for the collective resources of the hundreds of Commodore users comprising the Pittsburgh Commodore Group, the largest user group in the area. ***PCG*** supports the Commodore user with specialized discussion groups addressing your interests, monthly "hands-on" meetings for face-to-face idea sharing, an association store offering bargain prices on instructive books, disks, and many other useful items, and a Public Domain software library of thousands of programs. It's the beginning of the end of the computer blues when you join the ***PCG***. For more information on the Pittsburgh Commodore Group, call the ***PCG*** **BBS** at **434-5483**, or contact any Board Member.

We meet on the third Sunday of each month (except July and August) at

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